

explains, "telling each other stories." In the summer no one would dare to lie down in this manner; the scorpions and the horned vipers, hidden in the sand during the day, come out and prowl after dark. Farther on we leave the carriage; there are no more palm trees; the night seems to enlarge the desert, which is full to the brim of blue patches of light. Even Jammes was silent. And suddenly Athman, inspired with lyricism, throws off his burnoose, fastens his gandurah, and turns cartwheels in the moonlight.

Athman has found some collection or other of "Lives of Famous Men" and now, on the subject of camels, quotes Buffon or Cuvier, never talks of friendship without naming Henry IV and Sully, of courage without Bayard, and of the Big Dipper without Galileo.

... He writes to Degas upon sending him a walking-stick made of a palm stem: "What I like about you is that you do not like the Jews and that you read the *Libre Parole* ³ and that, like me, you consider Poussin a great French painter."

Jammes amuses himself by letting Athman read these lines, which he improvises while waiting for the carriage that is to take us to Droh:

*My dear friend Athman,
the trees that bear almonds,
jig trees and black-currant bushes
are made to be sat
under when you are tired.*

*without stirring,
your eyes tight closed.
You are happy lazy.
Below the garden you hear
the clear water singing
like an Arab woman.*

*You are so happy being lazy,
your eyes tight closed
as if you slept,
you are so happy, Athman,*

*in utter laziness
that you think you are dead.*⁴¹

^s *La Libre Parole* was a newspaper founded in 1892 by Edouard Drumont, author of the sensational book *La France juive*, to spread anti-Semitism. Its subtitle was "France for the French."

⁴ Mora *cher ami Athman,*
les arbres qui ont des amandes,